LECTURE II

THE ART OF IVAN TURGENEV

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INNOCENT Mark Twain learned that everything in Rome was the work of Michelangelo. The student of modern Russia finds that all things hark back to Peter the Great. The last two centuries of Russian history are but the continuation of Peter's work by his successors. Peter found Russia an Asiatic, Oriental power; the aim of his whole life was to make Russia European, to westernize Muscovy. To that end he spent years working as a common laborer in Europe, trying to learn Western methods; to that end he moved his capital from ancient Moscow to the modern city on the Baltic which he himself built as a window through which Russia could see and imitate Europe.

Peter was determined to cure Russia of her orientalism, and the remedies he administered were heroic. He began with the Russian exterior; his first step in making Russia European was to make the Russians look European. By imperial decree, he ordered the Russian *boyars* to alter their oriental flowing robes and to cut their beards—these two visible signs of their Asiatic kinship. On April 26, 1698, Peter the Great himself played European barber to the Russian nobility, and on that date, memorable in modern history, Peter's assistant in the work of modernization was his jester, Yakov Turgenev.

Exactly one hundred years after the death of Peter the Great, during the famous conspiracy of December 14, 1825, among those who were exiled to Siberia was one Nikolai

Turgenev, a critic of Russian ideals and an ardent champion of the abolition of serfdom.

These two members of the Turgenev family always come to my mind whenever I think of the greatest of all Turgenevs, the prince of novelists, as he has justly been called, Ivan Turgenev. His ancestor, the great Peter's jester, had done his share to ridicule Russia's orientalism and had held the mirror before the Russian *boyars* while Peter barbered their faces into some European shape. Ivan Turgenev spent a lifetime holding before the Russian people a mirror in which they could see all their shallowness and superficiality, all their ineffectual dreamings and fumings, all their aimless dilettantism, their veneered ignorance, their moral instability, their lack of consistent resolution, their prodigality of futile emotion, and their miserable poverty of will; and, through it all, their oriental inefficiency and their Tartar-like vulgarity and savagery, which made the unwashed lout peep out suddenly through the face of the Russian prince or princess "like a smell of cabbage wafted across the most delicate perfume."

And less than forty years after Ivan Turgenev's cousin, Nikolai, had been exiled to Siberia for holding liberal ideas and advocating the emancipation of the serfs, the novelist's portrayal of Russian peasant life (published under the title of "Memoirs of a Sportsman" in order to get by the censor) made all Russia thrill at the tragic spectacle, and moved Alexander II to become the Czar Emancipator and accord freedom to thirty million souls.

By a curious coincidence, at about the same time when Turgenev's "Memoirs of a Sportsman" caused the bloodless abolition of serfdom in Russia, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was stirring passions and purposes in America which could end only in a bloody drama. But the coincidence is largely

chronological, for whereas Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel was melodramatic and an undisguised tract, Turgenev's stories were veritable gems of art, marvelous transcriptions of life itself, dispassionately objective, and therefore doubly poignant. Beecher Stowe is an advocate, a pleader; Turgenev is first and last an artist. In the novel "Smoke" it is related—by a confirmed gossip, to be sure—how, when Mrs. Beecher Stowe was in Paris, a Russian serf-owner ventured to seek an introduction to her. "What!" Mrs. Beecher Stowe cried. "He presumes to be introduced to the author of 'Uncle Tom'?" And she gave him a slap on the cheek. "Go away at once!" Now the worst gossip on this long-suffering earth could not have connected such a tale with the author of "Memoirs of a Sportsman."

Ivan Sergeyevitch Turgenev was born on October 28, 1818, at Orel, half-way between Moscow and Kiev. His father, Sergei Turgenev, an officer in a local regiment of cuirassiers, in marrying Varvara Petrovna Litvinova, did not make a bad match, financially speaking, but the marriage was hopeless otherwise. Both natures were high-strung, and the moral instability of the husband was exceeded perhaps only by the wife's rancor and spitefulness. He died when the future novelist was only seventeen years of age, but the mother lived to be seventy. Her son's liberal tendencies and his choice of a literary career wounded her arrogantly aristocratic spirit. She refused her son's request to see her before she died; one of the last deeds of her life was calculated to wreck him financially. Such was Turgenev's mother. The villainous wife of Lavretzky in "A House of Gentlefolk" bears the name of Varvara. Thus much of sweetness and light did the mother's name possess for the son.

Nevertheless he had excellent training. In his youth he

was tutored in foreign languages; but his Russian he learned from a serf on the family estate,—"a philanthropic and philosophic plebeian,"—whose enthusiastic radicalism doubtless influenced the spiritual attitude of the youth. Turgenev was ever a passionate hunter, and his close communion with nature is indicated by the intimate part which nature plays in his novels: clouds and rivers, storm and sunshine, and the forest in spring and in autumn enter into the life of his characters and play the part which they play in folk-songs and in poetry of the highest type.

Notice the nature-environment in which his action moves; it reflects in the finest, most delicate manner the inner, spiritual life of his men and women. Especially is this true of the great scenes in his novels. Take, for instance, the rainstorm in "On the Eve," which brings Elena and Insarov together in the old abandoned oratory and draws from them both a brave confession of an exalted love. Compare it with the thunderstorm in "First Love," where an untutored soul first awakes to the strange empire of love and feels himself baffled, intoxicated, and consumed by it. In this thunderstorm, which draws the unsophisticated Voldemar to the Princess Zinaida, the flashes of lightning were "quivering and twitching, like the wing of a dying bird." Compare it again with the description of that other sudden, sinister tempest in the novel "Spring Freshets," whose dull vibration echoes and peals in the deep fastness of the forest, whose lurid glare blinds Sanin to all that is fine and holy in life, draws him into the watchman's wretched hut, and makes him passion-heated wax in the hands of the diabolically voluptuous temptress Marya,—Marya, who is lust incarnate and triumphant, possessing *le terrible don de la familiarité,* who makes wagers with her husband that she can seduce any man he may choose, and gives iron rings to all her victims. Tur-

genev is a poet, and just as his every character is a living being, so nature provides the overtones that swell the fundamental spiritual note of the action depicted and make his descriptions, not mere stage directions, as it were, but inevitable and indispensable elements of a unitary poetic effect.

In appreciating Turgenev's attitude alike toward his country and toward his own literary mission, it should not be forgotten that, in addition to being the greatest artist in the history of fiction, he was also, of all great novelists, the one blessed with the broadest and most genuine education and culture. Himself the guide of Russian thought and the unquestioned master of Russian speech, he made his home in Paris or Baden-Baden; the acknowledged lion of the literary lions of France and an Oxford Doctor of Civil Law, he was so perfectly at home with the ideals and the thought-currents of France, Germany, England, and even America that the shallowness and the thinly veneered vulgarity of his dilettante Russia outraged not only his honest patriotism and his faith in the Russian people, but outraged also his fine esthetic sensibility and his truly educated and cultured mind.

Turgenev found things Russian too disheartening to endure viewing them at close range day by day. His liberalism also, which had courageously expressed itself at the death of Gogol, whom he called "a great man," an offence for which Holy Russia caused his arrest and virtual banishment, made his life in his native land a source of constant danger and irritation. All these causes combined to make him during his later life a willing exile in western Europe. But his dealings with the everlasting Russian traveler and his own periodic visits to his native land allowed so keen an observer abundant opportunity to study Russian life, Rus-

sian humanity, the development of the Russian spirit. Like Gogol himself, Turgenev also found his vision of things Russian clarified by the distance which allowed him perspective and more genuine objectivity. And yet we have only to read his Reminiscences and Letters to learn how passionately he loved and longed for his native land, which he nevertheless knew too well to admire unreservedly. Yet he would love to live in Russia if he only could: "Russia is now passing through sad and gloomy times," he writes to Tolstoy; "but it is for this very reason that at this moment one feels the gnawing of conscience at living like a foreigner." We are reminded of the words of Lezhnyov in "Rudin": "Russia can get along without any one of us, but no one of us can get along without Russia."

Turgenev's novels are the record of Russia's spiritual growth during his life. Consider that he saw the abolition of serfdom, the rise of Slavophilism and Panslavism, and the beginnings of consistent, organized revolution in his native land, and you will see that million-voiced Russia provided him no end of material. In portraying this life, Turgenev showed a sort of novelistic clairvoyance; he seized concretely the dominant, essentially characteristic notes of Russian life,—he portrayed live human beings in which every Russian recognized something, perhaps all, of himself. And, as in the case of his character Bazarov, and indeed of the whole theme of "Fathers and Children," he was able sometimes to foresee the coming to life of a certain type of human character, a certain movement in Russia, to understand the conditions responsible for it, keenly to analyze its essentials, to anticipate its probable course and destiny, and even to baptize it before it was born,—as he certainly did baptize nihilism before there were any nihilists in Russia. He showed such prophetic insight in his portrayal of

the Russian revolutionist in his novel "Virgin Soil" that some of his enemies accused him of having been in touch with the revolutionists and others saw in him an agent of the secret police, while in reality Turgenev had been throughout only an observer of Russia who saw clearly what most Russians could perceive dimly, if at all. Even so does every great lyric poet publish our own unspoken thoughts and vaguely felt moods until, hearing in his lyrics the voice of our own heart, we feel as though some one has been prying into our own Holy of Holies.

And what is this Russian people which, depicted in terms of universally human portraits, unfolds itself before us in Turgenev's volumes? It is Russia million-voiced and Russia mutely enduring; and Turgenev's portraits, whether life-sized studies or the merest sketch-outlines, are true to nature not only in a physical sense: they possess spiritual verisimilitude. The human appeal which characterizes them all is genuine, born of the life with which the master has conceived them, and in no way the result of conscious or unconscious melodrama. If it can be said at all that Turgenev preaches, it is as life itself is a preachment which those who incline their souls may hear.

The message conveyed in "Memoirs of a Sportsman" is the more poignant and the impression doubly profound precisely because it is conveyed by means of pictures almost severe in their objectivity. From hamlet to hamlet, through forest and steppe and over country road, amid marshland and meadowland, in peasant-hut and feast-hall and dram-shop and counting-house, we follow the huntsman analyst, and dozens of living men and women meet our eyes, utter the burden of their souls, and pass on. Others come, and others, and one forgets to admire the artistry of the writer, so gripping is the living reality of his art.

The "Memoirs" abound in life-comprehending epigrams and master-strokes of description. "Russian maidens love eloquence." "The elder replied . . . languidly and awkwardly, as though he were buttoning his kaftan with half-frozen fingers." "Funtikov will serve us with fish worth a hundred rubles and prepared with tainted butter." The servility of the poor, shiftless Kalinitch earns him barely enough to keep body and soul together, while the peasant Khor moves to economic independence by the path of proud humility which makes him indifferent to formal freedom from serfdom. "Why should I buy my freedom?" he says. "As it is, I know my master." He is a very Socrates in his ironic self-depreciation, and yet perhaps of all Turgenev's peasants he is the most efficient and level-headed. And efficiency is indeed a mark of distinction in Turgenev's sportsman-land, because it is so rare.

A peculiar melancholy, a romantic melancholy at times, becomes ever more profound as we proceed from hut to hut, and the atmosphere of superstitious awe in the presence of a world of inscrutable, immense, malignant destiny is likewise an atmosphere of romance: the world is no mere machine for the animistic minds of the five lads in "Byezhin Meadow." The peasant's soul gropes in trepidation and spiritual squalor in a world whose natural beauties only heighten by contrast the desolate state of man. The hopeless misery of the poor is the more pathetic because it seems to leave the ordinary landed proprietor utterly unmoved and unaware of it. In these serf-lives, which to the reader are so intensely human, the masters of Russia's peasantry see no humanity whatever. Zvyerkov's wife is kindness itself and makes the life of her maids "a paradise visibly realized," but she simply refuses them permission to marry. When the servant Arina begs to be released from service,

so that she may follow the call of her heart, her prayer is to her mistress an evidence of rank ingratitude, and when, thwarted in the normal expression of her love, the poor maid becomes its prey, she is banished into misery.

A counting-house clerk is asked whether merchants give their servants larger wages than do landed proprietors. "God forbid!" he answers. "Why, a merchant would pitch you out of doors by the scruff of the neck if you were to ask wages from him. No; you must live in faith and in fear with a merchant." Life is one endless round of gloomy prospects,—"it is not cheerful to enter a peasant's hut by night." The indifference toward the serf's woes is loftier in the master, more brutal in the counting-house clerk and overseer, but in either case it appears implacable, and it is implacable not because of premeditated malice and cruelty, but because of a certain lack of sympathy, perhaps lack of imagination: the peasant is born to endure, it is his lot; if he protests, his very rebelliousness proves him unnatural, worthless. A master owes it to his serf to punish him. "Whom he loveth, he chasteneth, you know that yourself," Mardary Apollonitch quotes in self-justification when censured for his cruelty. And the whipped serf agrees with his master. "I deserved it," he says sententiously. "We are not whipped for trifles, that's not the custom with us,—naw, naw!"

The same stolid submission to implacable authority and pitiless injustice is portrayed in two other, longer stories, "Mumu" and "The Inn." The laundress Tatyana is called by the majordomo: "The mistress has hunted a bridegroom for thee." "I obey, Gavrila Andreitch. But who has been appointed as my bridegroom?" "Kapiton the shoemaker." "I obey, sir." "He is a reckless man—that's a fact. But the mistress pins her hopes on thee in that respect." "I obey,

sir." In "The Inn," a house-serf, Akim, has by long endeavor managed to establish himself as an innkeeper. But his social standing does not allow him to hold legal title to his property. Naum, a cunning young laborer-merchant, insinuates himself into the graces of Akim's wife, induces her to give him all her husband's savings, and with that money buys Akim's inn from the landed proprietress and turns both innkeeper and wife out of their own house. Incendiary anger flames up for an hour in Akim's heart, but he submits to his fate, pardons every one, sets out on a pilgrimage to the holy places of Russia, and to his mistress, who has wronged him beyond all words, he keeps sending blessed bread from sundry sanctuaries.

At times, to be sure, the serf's rebelliousness rises to a pitch of genuine terror, as in "The Wolf," where the very despair and helplessness of a peasant, forced by his misery to steal timber and caught in the act, makes him awesome and hypnotizes the wolfish forester into releasing him, albeit the latter remains disgusted with his one manifestation of human pity. Nor must we forget Ivan Suhikh in "Old Portraits." By a mere subterfuge he is taken away from a master whom he loves to one whom he loathes utterly. After protests and threats, he apparently submits to his fate. But one fine day he splits his master's head open with an axe. "I killed him," he tells the police. "I told him I would do it, and I did it. Bind me."

But Turgenev's theme in "Memoirs of a Sportsman" is not merely the oppression of man by man. Already the reader has been warned against mistaking this work for a tract against serf-ownership. Turgenev portrays Russian life as he finds it, and while man-made misery is perhaps most clearly apparent in it, it is neither the most tragic nor the most profound. There is the tragedy of life for which

no one in particular is culpable, a tragedy of circumstance, a nature-born, fate-begotten tragedy, to witness which is an experience the more agonizing because it does not allow one the relief of growing indignant at the villain-oppressor. And more impressive too than the vast misery of Russia is the Russian's capacity of endurance. The poet Tiutchev has rightly put it in the couplet which heads Turgenev's sketch "Living Holy Relics":

"O native land of patient fortitude,
Land of the Russian folk art thou!"

"Wonderful is the way in which the Russians die," Turgenev says. For sheer pathos and for the beauty of pathos, this sketch is easily the masterpiece in the collection. The love of plain earthly happiness and the love of the heavenly Christ blend most touchingly in the patient waiting of paralyzed Lukerya for the angel of death. A dancing beauty in her youth, she is now resigned to her fate; she wishes no cure; she finds a strange happiness in the very absence of any hope, in her very resignation. "Don't touch me, Master; don't take me to the hospital. . . . Who can help another? Who can enter into this soul? Sometimes I lie here alone like this, and it seems as though there were not another person in all the world except myself. I alone am living. And I feel as though something were blessing me. Thoughts come to me—even wonderful thoughts." Alone in her hopeless illness, her mind does not beg for sympathy, it lavishes sympathy on others. From her miserable deathbed she begs the landed proprietor to have the quit-rents of the serfs reduced,—"for they are very poor. But I need nothing. I am content with everything." The power of pain and suffering to regenerate a soul and bring it closer to God and Christ,—this typically Russian text upon which

almost every novel of Dostoyevsky is a sermon, is uttered here with unforgettable, concentrated intensity and pathos.

Perhaps the most significant way of entering into Turgenev's philosophy of life is by following its development through his six longer novels, which he himself advised us to read in the order in which he wrote them: "Dmitri Rudin"; "A Nobleman's Nest"; "On the Eve"; "Fathers and Children"; "Smoke"; "Virgin Soil"; the progressive revelation of nineteenth-century Russia, from the decay of the old nobility to the rebellious rise of the new democracy.

Dmitri Rudin, the hero of Turgenev's first great novel, has been called the typical embodiment of Russian character. Rudin is a man of lofty ideals, or rather he is loftily eloquent about ideals. Freedom, nobility of soul, moral courage, self-sacrifice are his daily topics. A most magnetic personality is Dmitri Rudin,—"that man not only knows how to move you, he lifts you up, he does not let you stand still, he stirs you to the depths and sets you on fire." He is truly generous; one doubts if in his nature there is an iota of mean selfishness; a sincere and an ardent idealist, he himself lives in the world of his glorious ideas of human emancipation. But exactly of what stuff is this champion of independence really made? His eloquent advocacy of human rights and freedom and his contagious enthusiasm captivate Natalia, the daughter of Rudin's hostess. Rudin himself loves her devotedly. But his radicalism makes him lose favor in the eyes of Natalia's family. The time for words has passed; arrived is the time for action. What are the lovers to do? Natalia looks to her brave young model of independence to utter the decisive words.

"We must submit," Rudin says.

Whereupon the young woman bursts out in words of spiritual disenchantment: "You spoke so often of self-sacri-

fice," she tells Rudin; "but do you know that, had you said to me now, this hour: 'I love you, but I cannot marry. I do not answer for the future; give me your hand and come with me!'—do you know that I would have come, that I would have confronted anything with you? But, alas, it is a long way from words to deeds!"

There is your Russian man as Turgenev saw him. His ideals are noble, but he is too inefficient spiritually, too weak-willed to translate them into action. His ideas are not motive forces; there is a deal of conversation, but it leads to no decision. He may be "upright, honorable, and simple," like Gagin in "Asya," a thoroughly lovable figure, or, like Ivan Afanasievitch in "Pyetushkov," he may be common, coarse, even unsightly, but in either case he is languid, without tenacity or inner ardor. A man who translates his thinking into concrete action may experience both fear and hope in anticipating the conclusions of his reasoning. But where will-energy is divorced from the rest of one's being, the froth of effusive emotion and the sparkle of clever wit and reckless thought-abandon are alike unavailing. If the mind feeds on mere ideas, then the more lofty the ideas, the more deadly is their narcotic influence: it lulls the soul of man to futile thought-spinning and inactivity; with all his aspiration, he remains superfluous, a stupid fifth wheel to the cart of actual life. So we read in "The Diary of a Superfluous Man": "I am falling into speculation, I think: that is a bad sign—am I not beginning to turn coward?" And again: "Emotional effusions are like licorice-root: when you take your first suck at it, it does n't seem bad, but it leaves a very bad taste in your mouth afterwards."

For such a human misfit one moment of genuine achievement would atone for an entire life-course of unfinished episodes. Rudin almost tastes the joy of atonement in the

struggles of '48; but Tchulkaturin, in "The Diary of a Superfluous Man," after living insignificantly to no purpose, is denied even the blessing of finding some meaning in death. He floats away with the last snows of early spring. As the messengers of death creep through his lungs, he has only one consolation: "In becoming annihilated, I shall cease to be superfluous."

Rudin fails because he is deficient in will-energy. A different man is Fyodor Lavretzky, the hero of Turgenev's next novel, "Dvoryanskoye Gnyesdo," variously translated in English as "A Nobleman's Nest," "A House of Gentlefolk," or "Liza." Here we have high ideals accompanied by strong will,—but here also life ends in futility: it is Lavretzky's past which makes a happy future impossible for him. Turgenev has lavished loving care on Lavretzky. The hero's father, an Anglomaniac, has sought to make of his son a hardy English gentleman; instead of producing an English gentleman, however, he turns out a man strong with men, but the easiest imaginable victim in the hands of a scheming woman like Varvara Pavlovna, whom he loves and marries before he knows what he is about. His dream of perfect bliss is destined to a rude shock when he discovers his wife's utter infidelity—he leaves her in Europe and, after training himself for his life's work, returns to Russia to till the soil in a civilized manner. Lavretzky lacks all the poetic flights of Rudin, but he is an efficient, sensible man who could bless Russia if only he were not such a rarity there.

One could scarcely imagine a woman more likely to be Lavretzky's ideal comrade in life than the heroine, Liza Kalitin. "In the most hidden nooks of the forest," Turgenev writes in "Yakov Pasynkov," "dreaming in primeval denseness, under fallen trees and thickets, grow fragrant

flowers." A fragrant flower, half opened, dreaming in primeval innocent goodness, is Liza. She is a rare creature. She "has no words of her own," but she has thoughts of her own, and she goes her own way; it is not her custom to ask others what she should do. From the first moment we have known her, we are certain that Panshin, the trivial, complacent, egotistic dilettante Panshin, has not the shadow of a chance of winning either her respect or her love. Yet she is young, innocent, fresh; love and passion are unspelled words to her. Turgenev has pictured greater, stronger women, but never so perfect a maiden as Liza. "Thoroughly imbued with a sense of duty, with the fear of wounding any one whatsoever, with a kind and gentle heart, she loved every one in general and no one in particular; God alone she loved with rapture, timidly, tenderly. Lavretzky was the first to break in upon her tranquil inner life." The inevitable melancholy of the unfortunate Lavretzky first evokes her pity; she tries to wake the unhappy husband to forgiveness for his undeserving wife, to purge his soul of bitterness. Gradually the woman's fresh, sympathetic charm and the man's grim tenderness deepen the friendship between them.

In "The Diary of a Superfluous Man," Turgenev portrays the miracle wrought by love in the soul of a dismal man: "I began to blossom out in spirit. Everything in me and round about me underwent such an instantaneous change! My whole life was illuminated by love—literally my whole life, down to the smallest detail—like a dark, deserted chamber into which a candle has been brought." Even such a miracle of transfiguration does Liza's friendship unwittingly produce in the life of Lavretzky. Neither of them has translated into words the actual character of the relation which binds them to each other. Then, by accident, La-

vretzky reads a report of his wife's death. Friendship declares itself to be love, for the man is now free to begin life once more.

But Lavretzky's wife is not dead. Varvara Pavlovna returns, and poor Liza enters a convent, while Lavretzky lives on, or rather, continues existing.

Love, happiness, fate: the dynamic, the goal, the lord of life; the one sets us afire, the other lures us on forever, the third lavishes on us unsought and unappreciated blessings or damns us undeservedly. Three powers in life, they are not for Turgenev three mystic entities; they are life itself. For what is love but the thirst for the thrill of genuine, intense living? In "The Region of Dead Calm," Veretyev tells the woman he loves: "Do you know why I drink? Look yonder at that swallow. . . . Do you see how boldly it manages its tiny body, and hurls it wherever it wishes? Now it has soared aloft, now it has darted downward. It has even piped with joy: do you hear? So that's why I drink, Masha, in order to feel those same sensations which that swallow experiences. . . . There is passion; . . . it produces the same effect. That is why I love you." Love is the longing freely to absorb another's life, to be absorbed into another. But that freedom is also a slavery—indeed, the quintessence of slavery. "In love there is no equality, no so-called free union of souls and other ideal things invented at their leisure by German professors. No; in love one person is the slave, the other is the sovereign, and not without cause do the poets prate of the chains imposed by love. Yes, love is a chain, and the heaviest of chains at that."

And just as love brings chains with it, so the longing for happiness brings disenchantment; the surest way not to attain it is to set out in pursuit of it. "Happiness is not to

be captured by battle. But we must not forget that not happiness but human dignity is the chief goal of life." So writes Turgenev in "Faust": "Life is a heavy toil. Renunciation, constant renunciation—that is its secret meaning, its solution; not the fulfilment of cherished ideas and dreams, no matter how lofty they may be, but the fulfilment of duty —that is what men must take heed to; not until he imposes upon himself chains, the iron chains of duty, can he attain to the end of his course without falling."

But herein precisely is the essence of Turgenev's melancholy: man, who understands this scale of values, whose noble soul admires the prospect of ascending that scale,— man finds himself thwarted in his upward striving by a Fate which dominates his life, and yet a Fate of his own making. "As clouds are first formed by the exhalations from the earth, rise up from its bosom, then separate themselves from it, and bear over it either blessings or ruin, just so around each one of us and from us ourselves is formed—how shall I express it?—is formed a sort of atmosphere which afterwards acts destructively or salutarily upon us ourselves. This I call Fate. In other words, and to put it simply: each person makes his own fate, and it makes each person."

This is a heroic philosophy, is it not? It should make one optimistic about the initial chance one has in his struggle with Destiny. But the same Alexyei who philosophizes so bravely in "A Correspondence" ends by lamenting his own fate. "And what a fate is mine!" he writes after he has sunk to sensual insignificance. "In my youth I was resolutely determined to conquer heaven for myself. . . . Later on, I fell to dreaming about the welfare of all mankind, the prosperity of my fatherland. Then that passed off: I thought only of how I might manage my domestic, my family life . . . and I tripped over an ant-hill—and flop! I

went headlong to the ground, and into the grave. What master-hands we Russians are at winding up in that fashion! . . ."

There is scarcely any more masterly example of the unutterable pathos of which Turgenev is capable than the closing paragraph of "A Nobleman's Nest." " 'And the end?' perchance some dissatisfied reader will say. 'And what became of Lavretzky? Of Liza?' But what can one say about people who are still alive, but who have already departed from the earthly arena? Why revert to them? They say that Lavretzky paid a visit to that distant convent where Liza had hidden herself—and saw her. In going from one choir to another she passed close to him—passed with the even, hurriedly submissive gait of a nun—and did not cast a glance at him; only the lashes of the eye that was turned toward him trembled almost imperceptibly, and her haggard face was bowed a little lower than usual—and the fingers of her clasped hands, interlaced with her rosary, were pressed more tightly to one another. What did they both think, what did they both feel? Who knows? Who shall say? There are moments in life, there are feelings . . . we can only indicate them,—and pass by."

One has to read the great love-scenes and the scenes of great pathos in Turgenev to appreciate what a chaste, what a delicately tender spirit he was. But it is not with Turgenev's masterly portrayal of love that we are at present mainly concerned. Ask the question: What makes human life fail of greatness, what saps the energies of men, what makes the nobility of their thought ineffectual? In "Dmitri Rudin" we have the first demon of failure: weak-willed instability of spirit. In "A Nobleman's Nest" Lavretzky's life ends in unrealized futile aspirations because of the prejudicial influence of past folly, which claims one's mature

life as atonement in the stern course of conventional expiation. The weak will of man himself; the prejudicial influence of society; the third tragic demon, nature and circumstance, is portrayed in Turgenev's next novel, "On the Eve."

In many ways "On the Eve" is Turgenev's masterpiece, although the novel "Fathers and Children," which followed it, appears stronger and created a greater stir. Like Diogenes of old, Turgenev hunted over Russia with a lantern to find a *man,* a stern, strong personality of vigorous will, a man of consistent action rather than an eloquent dispenser of ideals. His failure to find that type in Russian life is itself a criticism of Russian life. To hold before the eyes of Russia this model of moral virility, Turgenev wrote "On the Eve." The title, seemingly puzzling at first, is very apt. "On the Eve" of what? "On the Eve" of true self-realization, true greatness for Russia: that is to say, in "On the Eve" Turgenev the artist depicts the men and women Russia must possess before the dawn of a new era can illumine the Russian twilight.

Elena, the heroine, is Turgenev's strongest, noblest woman. She is not a paragon of beauty. Indeed, Turgenev has made her the more compelling by the very blemishes in her, which only heighten the effect of the charms that she does possess. She yearns for a living ideal that would compel her unqualified devotion. "The life that surrounded her seemed at its best trifling and unbearable. 'How live without love? To love no one!' she thought, and her heart was filled with a strange and indefinable desire. . . . She would be oppressed with a vague longing for something, she knew not what, something that none before her had ever wished for, something that none in all Russia had ever imagined."

But she is also proud, stern, implacable in her demands: she is no sentimental enthusiast. One feels that this girl of

nineteen would be a very priestess of love, and brave danger, and death itself, could she find an ideal, a cause worth her devotion. She could love so perfectly the man who could perfectly meet her demands, only because she could love absolutely no other. She may be of the sex which men please themselves to call weaker, but she is not lacking in strength, either of will or of emotion. "Any exhibition of weakness irritated her, stupidity made her angry, a lie she could never be brought to pardon, nothing could move her when once she had formed a resolution. . . ." Such a rare nature, in which lofty aspirations combine with demands as lofty, in which longing emotions are grounded in indomitable will, a nature tender, but not weakly tender, susceptible to the least flutter of emotion, yet firm as a rock in its refusal to rest satisfied with unrealized ideals,—such a woman Turgenev has painted in Elena Nikolaevna.

But who is to answer the call of this rare soul? Two men love Elena: Shubin, the irrepressible artist, a sculptor, is a very butterfly of flitting, unstable emotions. Not one note of sternness sobers the song of his life. Undoubtedly he has talent, yet he takes seriously neither his art nor himself. Simpering damsels like Zoe he could perhaps make happy, or flower-girls like Annette, but Elena he frankly confesses himself unable to understand.

The other suitor, Bersenyev, is a scholar, a bookish university valedictorian, calm, intellectual, nothing if not serious, with a high conception of his academic future, eager to write a ponderous history of something or other. He is tender-hearted, too; generous, as only Russians can be generous,—witness his self-effacing, honorable loyalty to his friend who becomes his rival, so masterfully portrayed in the course of the novel. But Bersenyev's life is the theoretic life; one doubts if it is in him to cast everything aside and

burn his life out to light any torch whatever. And it is that sort of man alone that Elena Nikolaevna can possibly love. Though she likes his honest devotion to his academic task, we feel that Bersenyev lacks at once the romance and the strength of spirit that would be necessary to win Elena.

"I love Elena; Elena loves you!" the artist Shubin informs Bersenyev. "What a lovely night, quiet, fresh, and full of shadows! . . . Believe me, there will never be such another glorious night as this in all your life!"

But the future professor goes home, lights a candle, puts on his dressing-gown, and taking from his bookcase Raumer's "History of the Hohenstaufen," begins reading from the page where he had left off the night before.

Shubin the artist is too effervescent a spirit for Elena; Bersenyev is a mind too calm. And thus Elena's youth, like water beneath a frozen stream, flows on silently and quickly, in outward inactivity, but in inward uneasiness and strife.

It is one of the points of this story which made it a criticism of Russian character that the nation which produced such a woman as Elena could not supply a corresponding man. Turgenev finds his man outside of Russia, as if to hold before Russian men at once a picture of their own insufficiency and a model of possible regeneration. Dmitri Insarov, the hero, is a Bulgarian patriot. Himself orphaned by a Turkish massacre, his whole life is dominated by one concrete idea. Goodness, wisdom, courage, self-sacrifice, nobility, love, hate, life and death—all these possess for him one clear, concrete meaning: the liberation of his country from the Turks. Shubin sketches him well in speaking to his philosophic friend: "Talents, none at all; poetry, deuced little; capacity for hard work, enormous; memory, almost as enormous; mind, neither discursive nor deep, but healthy and quick; speech, dry, energetic, and even eloquent when

he gets upon his—between ourselves we may say—stupid Bulgaria. . . . But further, you will never be on such a footing with him as to say *thou,* and no one ever was. I, of course, an artist, can be no favorite of his; and I am proud that I cannot. Cold-hearted, cold-hearted, and capable of grinding us all to powder! He is attached to his country; not like our empty-heads who merely flatter the common people; but he tries to unite the whole nation in one common work. Thus his task is more easy and more intelligible: to drive out the Turks, that is all; that is the work to which he dedicates himself. But, thank God, all these fine qualities do not take with women. There is nothing attractive, no charm about him; he is not like either of us." Which last remark shows Shubin a better judge of Insarov, whom he has just met, than of women like Elena.

From the very first we know that she will love Insarov. "He not only talks," she writes in her diary; "he acts, and will act."

"Do you love your country dearly?" she asks him.

"As yet I cannot say," he answers. "Only when a man has died for his country can you truly say that he loved it."

"Why is he not a Russian?" she thinks. "No, he never could be that."

Action, not mere words; decisions, not mere sighs and longings: such are the motive forces in this man. He does not scatter his energies. Turgenev saw Russia flapping its million wings enthusiastically, but not knowing whither to fly; dabbling in everything, accomplishing nothing. But listen to his Bulgar hero: "Just think," he tells the Russian woman, "the veriest peasant, the lowest beggar in Bulgaria, not a whit less than I myself, awaits one and the same thing; we have all but one and the same thing in view—and think what strength, what assurance, this unity of aim must give us!"

Again we read in Elena's famous diary: "I think that the reason why Dmitri is so tranquil is because he has devoted his entire self to one work, to the realization of one dream. What can disturb him? He who gives himself up entirely, entirely, entirely, is superior to all contingencies. It is not *I* wish, but *it* wishes."

Can we trace the growth of the heroic love which follows? Determined not to allow his passion for Elena to interfere with his patriotic mission, Insarov would stifle all emotion and leave her. But she proves herself his equal. For the sake of him and his ideal she abandons her family, her native land, and starts with him to share his perilous life in Bulgaria. An attack of quick consumption kills Insarov on the way; Elena goes to Bulgaria alone to continue his work, and is lost among the oppressed compatriots of her husband.

A noble tragedy is "On the Eve," but a tragedy just the same. The spiritual weakling Shubin lives and prospers on his idle fancies; Insarov, the grim hero, is stricken by hostile nature and dies. What avails his master-soul before that hacking cough? Life is a strange puzzle. "It will often happen that a man, with involuntary apprehension, asks himself: Can it be that I am already thirty—forty—fifty years old? How is it that life passes so quickly? How is it that death presses so quickly upon us? Death is like a fisherman who has caught a fish in his net, but leaves it for a while in the water; the fish still swims about and fancies itself to be free, but the net encircles it, and the fisherman seizes hold of it whenever the fancy takes him."

Profoundly disenchanted Turgenev was with Russia. And yet, even while he was writing "Rudin," "A Nobleman's Nest," "On the Eve," a new Russian type was coming into being, a new generation with new ideals which were

to set Russia afire, to give birth to Russian Insarovs and multiply the Elenas in Russia. A spirit of denial, of destructive radicalism was arising, as usual beginning with mere ideas, mental attitudes, but destined to pass into action with a definite goal, political or economic, and lead to all the noble bravery which lies buried in the frozen wastes of Siberia. This new spirit Turgenev analyzes in "Fathers and Children," the most famous Russian book, and the one containing Turgenev's strongest Russian hero, Evgeny Bazarov.

The contrast is between the respectable, orthodoxly radical, sentimental, formal, noble-hearted fathers and the blatantly radical, vigorous, defiant, negating children. A new generation has sprung up, and to it the old honors, principles, and duties mean nothing. The father of young Bazarov, an old regimental doctor, speaks in terms of profound respect of the noble-born Arcady's father and uncle. But the son has only contempt for their respectability and for the respectability of all other old fogies, while well-born Arcady himself looks up to the son of the poor regimental doctor.

Turgenev's hero utterly scorns all romanticism, all poetry, all conventional principles. Bred on the materialism of Büchner, he is a destructive genius, but a genius of unquestioned force. Along with the democracy of this modern son of the soil, there is a good deal of crude materialism and a certain cruel, even coarse irony.

Absolute independence, absolute freedom from all conventions, from all prejudices—this is Bazarov's aim. His aim is frankly destructive. The work of building up he leaves for future generations; his age needs men to tear down, to level this civilization of lies. For this task young Arcady, son of the aristocracy, proves too weak. The chil-

dren of the plebeians must do this work also, as they have done all other work in Russia. "You lack boldness, wickedness," Bazarov tells the youth when they finally part, "but in turn you are endowed with a youthful audacity and ardor. That does not suffice for the work which we others are pursuing. And then, you gentlemen cannot go beyond a certain indignation or a generous resignation, things which do not signify much. You think you are great men, you think yourselves at the pinnacle of human perfection when you have ceased to beat your servants; and we—we ask only to fight with one another and to beat. Our dust reddens your eyes, our mire soils you; you are truly not of our height; you admire yourselves complacently, you take pleasure in reproaching yourselves; all that bores us; we have other things to do than to admire and reproach ourselves; we must have other men broken on the wheel."

Perhaps the most pathetic thing in the book, from the point of view of literary art, is the trembling admiration with which Bazarov's old parents watch over their son, whom they at once revere and fear. The cold radicalism of the son is in tragic contrast to the loving orthodoxy of the mother and the heart-breaking effort which the father makes to keep up with his son's progressiveness, not to be a tedious old fossil in his own child's eyes. The scene where the son, leaving his parents after a three days' visit because their loving attention gives him no opportunity to work, and the courage with which the father receives the crushing news, is a scene which, for suppressed pathos, is scarcely to be matched in all fiction.

Bazarov does return to his parents; a wound which he receives while treating a peasant suffering from typhus infects him with the disease and claims his life. The nihilist, who in his life denied all, is himself denied by death.

"Fathers and Children" caused a national tempest in Russia. Both the fathers and the children thought themselves outraged in Turgenev's novel. Especially the new generation felt wounded, forever hurt by Turgenev, and it did not forgive him to his very death. Turgenev's was the unenviable lot of the sane mediator, the lot of Socrates, the lot of all who are too penetrating to go to either extreme and too honest to join either of the two parties of narrow thinkers which comprise the majority in all lands and particularly in Russia. In his "Poems in Prose" Turgenev pictures those two types. On the one hand the two toilers, anxious to get hold of a bit of rope with which the authorities have hanged the man who has tried to liberate them, for "they say that that brings the greatest good luck to a house." For these toilers, for those who exploited their toil, and for those whose orthodoxy regarded the old order as divinely ordained, "Fathers and Children" was doubtless too radical. For another class it was too conservative: for those whose rebellious souls found no virtue whatever in the established order, and even more for the type of man who always stirred Turgenev's sarcasm—the brainless dolt whose meager capital of intelligence exhausted itself in bold criticism. "You are behind the times," says the Fool in another "Poem in Prose." And society is impressed by the Fool's self-assured criticism. "There is a career for fools among cowards."

The failure of Russia to understand his works, her hatred for the man who revealed her true state, outraged Turgenev's sensibilities as artist and man. There is no hatred in Turgenev's next two novels, "Smoke" and "Virgin Soil," but there is less pity. Turgenev pictures the utter futility of the Russian society man and woman, frivolous, veneered sepulchers of corruption; the futility also of the unkempt,

disheveled, loud-voiced, word-mongering radicals; the utter inefficiency of those who would upset Russian society without having any well-thought-out ideals either of tearing down or of building up.

I wish I might dwell further on that immortal life-size portrait of the Russian society lioness—the portrait of Irina Pavlovna—in "Smoke." But it was not the portrait of Irina Pavlovna that Russia did not like: it was the judgment of Russia, expressed in the words of Litvinov, the hero, expressed even more tragically by that derelict of a man, Potugin.

The Slavophils and Panslavists, who wished to shut Russia from the rest of the world, who deluded themselves with complacent dreams about Russia's supremacy, exasperated Turgenev. "Nothing to compare with Russia, indeed!" Potugin exclaims in "Smoke." "Our bristles, for instance, are large and strong, because our pigs are poor; our hides are stout and thick, because our cows are thin; our tallow's rich because it's boiled down with half the flesh. . . . They talk to me about our inventive faculty! The inventive faculty of the Russians! Why, our worthy farmers complain bitterly and suffer loss because there's no satisfactory machine for drying grain in existence, to save them from the necessity of putting their sheaves in ovens, as they did in the days of Rurik; these ovens are fearfully wasteful—just as our bast shoes and our Russian mats are —and they are constantly getting on fire. The farmers complain, but still there's no sign of a drying machine. And why is there none? Because the German farmer doesn't need them; he can thresh his wheat as it is, so he doesn't bother to invent one, and we . . . are not capable of doing it! Not capable—that's all about it! Try as we may!

From this day forward I declare whenever I come across one of these rough diamonds, these self-taught Russian geniuses, I shall say: 'Stop a minute, my worthy friend! Where's that drying machine? Let's have it!' "

And the answer comes from the young painter Gagin in "Asya," whose studies show life and truth, but whose drawing is slovenly and inaccurate, and who has not finished a single picture. "I have not studied as I should have done, and that cursed Slavonic laxity is asserting itself. When one dreams of work, he soars like an eagle; it seems as though he could move the earth from its place; but in the execution he immediately grows slack and weary."

Why is this novel called "Smoke"? As Litvinov the hero turns his back on Baden-Baden and its Russian colony, "the wind blew facing the train; whitish clouds of steam, some singly, others mingled with other darker clouds of smoke, whirled in endless file past the window at which Litvinov was sitting. He began to watch this steam, this smoke. Sometimes the wind changed, the line bent to right or left, and suddenly the whole mass vanished, and at once reappeared at the opposite window; then again the huge tail was flung out, and again it veiled Litvinov's view of the vast plain of the Rhine. He gazed and gazed, and a strange reverie came over him. . . . 'Smoke, smoke,' he repeated several times; and suddenly it all seemed as smoke to him, everything, his own life, Russian life—everything human, and especially everything Russian. All smoke and steam, he thought; all seems forever changing, on all sides new forms, phantoms flying after phantoms, while in reality it is all the same and the same again; everything hurrying, flying towards something, and everything vanishing without a trace, attaining to nothing; another wind blows, and all is dashing

in the opposite direction, and there again the same untiring, restless, and useless gambols! 'Smoke, smoke, nothing but smoke!' "

Smoke is not lacking in "Virgin Soil," but through the smoke we can see undoubted fire. Young Russia, as Turgenev pictures it in this last of his great novels, does not show very much greater capacity for action than it does in "Smoke"; the builders of the radiant to-morrows still spend their time in "those nocturnal, interminable discussions, which in such proportions and in such a form can hardly be characteristic of any other race whatsoever." But there is a radical change: discussions are their own reward in "Smoke"; in "Virgin Soil," on the other hand, arguments, projects, speculations are very clearly wearisome to those taking part in them; very keen is the conscious thirst for action. Of this indifference to eloquent words and this insistent demand for action, two characters in the book are the embodiment; and of the two, the man Markelov plays a secondary rôle, even though he precipitates the dénouement. Markelov is headstrong, grim, "like John the Baptist when he had eaten the locusts,—the locusts alone without any honey"; he is not balanced enough for efficient leadership; but he is no Rudin; he is on more than speaking terms with his ideals. Genuine to the heart and aware of worse prospects than the scaffold, he can be cowed by no threats whatever. The peasants to whom he preaches revolt themselves betray him to the authorities; but his own failure makes him no pessimist about the cause as a whole. "I did not set about it rightly," he says, and takes his medicine with a firm jaw and without heroics.

But Marianna, the heroine, is the very personification of the new Russia longing to burn itself in the all-consuming fire of actual combat. When her lover Nezhdanov tells her

about his meeting with Markelov and Solomin, this young daughter of a dishonest official is impatient about all he has to say of their discussions; one question alone fires her whole being: When is the struggle to begin, and where, and how can she enter it without delay? She rejoices that her hands are growing red and hard; and she is in instant expectation that, if necessary, she will ascend the scaffold. "Do you believe in the cause, Marianna?" Nezhdanov asks her, and she draws herself up and raises her head: "Yes, Alexyei, I do believe in it. I believe in it with all the powers of my soul. And I will consecrate my whole life to that cause! To my very last breath!"

Nezhdanov himself is built of a different fiber. This student, whom men of action trust and who inspires valorous men, is himself the battle-ground of Rudins and Insarovs. Ever longing to lose himself in self-forgetting struggle, he ever finds the fountains of action drying up in his soul. He writes verses and is ashamed of it; he would be proud of converting peasants to the cause, but their vodka nauseates him. "A romanticist of realism," the effervescent, timorous firebrand Pakhlin calls him. From the very start he is foredoomed to failure. He curses "this nervousness, this sensitiveness, this impressionability, fastidiousness" which are his very inheritance. "They say that one must learn the language of the common people, learn their habits and customs," he writes, wearing a stinking burgher kaftan. "Nonsense, nonsense, nonsense! One must believe in what one says, and talk as he pleases! But when I begin to speak it is like a guilty man, and I keep begging forgiveness." An insuperable barrier separates him from the masses whom he would awaken. And since he cannot live his life on the only terms he honors, he would not live at all. "I did not know how to *simplify* myself; the only thing that was left was to

erase myself altogether," he writes in his farewell letter to Marianna. He is not afraid of the prison walls. "But to be incarcerated for the sake of a cause in which one does not believe is—entirely unfitting." So he blows out his brains.

Marianna marries Solomin. Of all Turgenev's characters, Solomin is the least typically Russian, if we can judge of what is typically Russian from Turgenev's gallery of portraits. But the Russian workmen to whom Nezhdanov is an alien obey Solomin like a master, respect him as their superior, yet treat him as an equal. "He is one of us," they declare proudly. He is the very reverse of a firebrand, and he even quenches enthusiasm, but he inspires trust. Men wonder at themselves that he compels their respect and admiration; but they respect and admire him notwithstanding. At first glance he strikes Marianna as indefinite, impersonal. "But the more she scrutinized him, the more she listened to his remarks, the stronger did her feeling of confidence—precisely that, of confidence—in him become. That calm, not exactly awkward, but ponderous man not only could not lie, dissimulate: one could rely upon him as upon a stone wall. He would not betray; he would understand and uphold."

Solomin talks little, not because he has no thoughts, but perhaps because he has no doubts about his thoughts. "I always know what I am talking about," he simply informs the peppery, contemptible upholder of reaction, Kalomyeitzev. He has grown up from the soil, and he knows that soil full well; he has no roseate illusions about the common people like Marianna, and he is thoroughly acquainted with the Russian nobleman's inadequacy to cope with the problems of Russia. This is a man who works hard and well, and without eloquence; he cannot be stampeded either by

cowardly panic or by firebrand enthusiasm. He is thorough; he is genuine; he is likewise cautious.

He establishes a school and a hospital at the factory which he superintends, but he refuses to allow the distribution of revolutionary pamphlets among the men under his charge. He is not anxious to evade death, not he; but he thinks too much of his life to sacrifice it recklessly; he is too thrifty for that. He expects no quick solution of Russia's problems, nor does he believe in quick solutions. He believes in daily simple service. He can distinguish between the great and the merely grand: Marianna sighs for heroic sacrifice, but he tells her: "In my opinion, to comb the hair of a scabby little child is a sacrifice—and a great sacrifice, of which not many are capable. You will wash pots like a dirty-faced scullery-maid, and pluck fowls. . . . And then, who knows but you will save the fatherland?"

"I should like to justify your expectations," she says; "and then—I should be ready to die."

"No, live—live! . . . You are already, all of you Russian women, more capable and more lofty than we men!" And therein speaks Turgenev himself, whose disenchantment with the weak longings of Russian manhood found consolation and hope in the idealistic strength and energy of Russia's women. Almost all his genuine heroes are heroines. In picturing Solomin's recognition of this truth, Turgenev pays a rare tribute to the intelligence of the factory superintendent. It is an essential part of Turgenev's philosophy of life, this failure to find spiritual strength and energy of soul in Russia's manhood. Homeric physical strength is in Kharlov, the "Lear of the Steppes"; Gerasim, in "Mumu," has brutal might, but the motive agencies in the life of the spirit Turgenev finds in womankind. His women are saving angels and evil geniuses alike, their energy of

will and life-ardor yield them the shears of destiny: they are Liza, Elena, Marianna, Varvara, Irina, Marya; but among Turgenev's men heroic virtue is as rare as aggressive vice. Kalomyeitzev, in "Virgin Soil," is despicable; Naum, in "The Inn," is crafty and mean; Vassily Ivanovitch, in "Three Portraits," is perhaps the most accomplished villain one could desire; but these are exceptions, just as Solomin and Bazarov are exceptions. A virgin soil is Russia, and "virgin soil should be broken up, not with the primitive plough that skims along the surface, but with the modern plough which cuts deep."

When Sienkiewicz, in "Without Dogma," speaks of Slavic unproductivity, when it is written that Hamlet is Russia, the words are not wholly without meaning. Turgenev himself was something of a Hamlet. Asked once to give a definition of perfect happiness, he answered: "Laziness without remorse," thus proving himself a true Russian. But if this greatest artist of Russia was himself no Brand, he was too honest a genius to play the Peer Gynt. Always he criticized Russia, yet always he loved her, always he believed in Russia. Note his description of the old couple Fomushka and Fimushka; it is a message of hope in the native strength of Russia's virgin soil. "There are pools on the steppes of that sort: although they have no outlet, they never become covered with scum because they have springs at the bottom. And my old folks have springs—there at the bottom of their hearts—pure, exceedingly pure springs."

Georg Brandes speaks of the harmony between Turgenev's own estimate of a character and his actual delineation of it. This harmony is perhaps in no case so exquisitely exemplified as in "Asya." From her first appearance to her last, the impression which Asya produces has a certain lyrical unity; the author does not change his mind about her

character, nor, on the other hand, does he impose a character upon her. And Asya's irresolute lover shows the same true relation of the artist to his creation. He languishes for happiness. It is offered him in the self-revealing love of Asya. But happiness comes too suddenly; he who languishes for it finds himself disconcerted by its arrival. Like the story-teller in "Andrei Kolosov," like Fustov in "A Hapless Girl," he too postpones its attainment until the morrow. But "the word to-morrow was invented for irresolute people." "To-morrow I shall be happy! There is no to-morrow for happiness; neither has it any yesterday, and it recks not of the future; it has the present, and not even a day at that, but a moment."

Like some of the sons and daughters of his fancy, Turgenev himself was a lifelong pilgrim on the road to the happiness with which true attainment blesses man. Nor are his characters alone subject to disenchantment. The lyrical intermezzo "It Is Enough," which he wrote after "On the Eve" and before "Fathers and Children," is a poignant self-revelation of a knight on the battle-field of ideals, who in the midst of the combat asks himself whether it is worth while. The satanic energy of man, which blasts effort, vitiates achievement, and poisons the joy of lofty endeavor, is not pain or misery or death, or even failure. It is a dread of pettiness. "The terrible thing is that there is nothing terrible, that the very substance of life itself is petty, uninteresting, and insipid to beggary." One spends his life-blood in battling for noble ideals, in wrestling with the powers of evil, or one burns his being in devotion to beauty, one holds aloft the torch of artistic truth—*cui bono?* What is the use of enlightening mankind? "Why demonstrate to gnats that they are gnats?" "Man is the child of Nature; but she is the universal mother and has no preferences. . . . She cre-

ates by destroying, and it is a matter of perfect indifference to her what she creates, what she destroys, if only life be not extirpated, if only death does not lose its rights. And therefore she as calmly covers with mould the divine visage of Phidias' Jupiter as she does a plain pebble, and delivers over to be devoured by the contemned moth the most precious lines of Sophocles. . . ." So writes the poet of "A City of Dreadful Night":

"The sense that every struggle brings defeat
Because Fate holds no prize to crown success;
That all the oracles are dumb or cheat
Because they have no secret to express;
That none can pierce the vast black veil uncertain
Because there is no light beyond the curtain;
That all is vanity and nothingness."

"How are we, poor men, poor artists, to come to an agreement with this deaf and dumb force, blind from its birth, which does not even triumph in its victories, but marches, ever marches on ahead, devouring all things?"

Has Turgenev answered this question which most writers do not even ask? He produced several masterpieces after the writing of "It Is Enough." What gave him the inspiration to persist in a task which his reason found so hopeless, so futile? Perhaps life also is futile, but we who treasure the hope that it is not futile—can we dash that hope to bits by putting an end to our lives? Man lives on and hopes. And who knows? Perhaps this determination to live on and hope is bringing the hope itself to realization.

The blind stupidity of nature and of man oppressed the creative soul of Turgenev, yet he kept on to the end—and at the very last he points out the guardian angel of his ideal pilgrimage, the rock of his support and the source of his

inspiration: the indomitable might and beauty of the Russian Word, the Word which for his artist soul was God. This is the last "Poem in Prose," the last page of Turgenev's works. It is entitled "The Russian Language":

"In days of doubt, in days of painful meditation concerning the destinies of my fatherland, thou alone art my prop and my support, O great, mighty, just, and free Russian language! Were it not for thee, how could one fail to fall into despair at the sight of all that goes on at home! But it is impossible to believe that such a language was not bestowed upon a great people!"